



AUTUMN

Where has this beautiful sunny autumn day with its sparkling colors gone? As I sit alone in my miserable hut, my attention is drawn to the night which has come. It was such a fine evening that I forgot to return to the village in time. And what is worse, I didn't see the full moon rise and now it is so high it must have come up some hours before sunset. It was there all the time. First as an unimportant white circle, weak as a cloud, a celestial danger sign so faint that few were perturbed. Then as a yellowish disc of moon-faced deceit and false urgency. Finally, as a strong ghostly white infernal ball with the sneering message that I am too late. I am alone now in the forest and cannot leave here until the sun's return.

I know only too well what happens to those who seek their way home through the forest on a moonlight night in the autumn. Once the evil spirits have led them astray

they become insane, if they survive at all. From then on they will be panic-stricken and their lives will be short. So I will stay in my hut until dawn. The village has seen enough corpses recently. My father, my mother and my sister have died mysteriously, one after another, during the last thirty-three days. I have no other relatives.

The autumn night is damp and chilly. Drops of black water fall from the rock wall in the hut. Bizarre! But tonight all seems black except the full moon. I look at it and it seems to look at me. I hope and the moon jeers. I pray and it smiles. I cry and it is amused so I stop hoping and it is pleased. And now they come: werewolves, vampires, ghosts and devils with their eyes ablaze. It is dark and I shall die. It is autumn.